

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 131505Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4100

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 3953

EXDIS

EUR FOR ACTING ASST SEC ARMITAGE FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TECH, RO
SUBJ: ROMANIAN INTEREST IN MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND
TECHNOLOGY

REF: A. BUCHAREST 3675
B. DAO BUCHAREST 0231 301535Z JUL 75 (BUCH 3663)
C. STATE 182142
D. DAO BUCHAREST 0232 301638Z JUL 75 (BUCH 3671)

1. THIS MESSAGE IS IN REPLY TO YOUR AUGUST 11 PHONE
CONVERSATION WITH DICK SCISSORS REQUESTING FURTHER COMMENT
ON REFTELS A AND B. WITH GENERAL WEYAND'S VISIT COMING UP, WE HAD
BEEN PLANNING ADDITIONAL COMMENT WHICH THIS MESSAGE
REPRESENTS. THE SUBJECT INCIDENTALLY WAS NOT BROACHED DURING
THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT AND WE HAVE RECEIVED NO FURTHER
APPROACHES FROM THE GOR SINCE REFTELS NOR DO I REALLY
EXPECT ANY.

2. DICK SCISSORS SAID YOU ALSO MENTIONED PRESS INQUIRIES
ON THIS SUBJECT. WOULD YOU ENLIGHTEN ME BY CABLE ABOUT
THE NATURE OF THEM? THE POSSIBILITY THAT THIS SUBJECT MAY
HIT THE PRESS CONCERNS ME SINCE THE GOR TO DATE HAS BEEN
GIVEN NO REASON TO BELIEVE WE WOULD NOT TREAT THE MATTER
WITH UTMOST CONFIDENTIALITY, AT LEAST DURING THE INITIAL
PERIOD THE REQUEST IS UNDER REVIEW. I KNOW WE HAVE NO
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INTEREST IN ANY PRESS PLAY AT THIS STAGE, SO I TRUST WE

ARE RESPONDING TO ANY PRESS INQUIRIES IN A COMPLETELY
NON-COMMITAL MANNER.

3. ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE MATTER, I REMAIN PERSUADED
THAT THE BEST POSTURE FOR US TO TAKE AT THE TIME OF
GENERAL WEYAND'S VISIT IS THAT THERE OBVIOUSLY ARE
POLITICAL, MILITARY AND LEGAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN PRO-
VIDING ANY MILITARY-RELATED EQUIPMENT TO A MEMBER OF THE
WARSAW PACT WHICH REQUIRE THOROUGH ANALYSIS AND REVIEW BY
THE USG. WE SHOULD NOTE THAT WE EXPECT AN EXPANSION OF
CONTACTS BETWEEN OUR MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS TO BE USEFUL
FOR BOTH SIDES. AS THESE CONTACTS EXPAND WE WILL CONSIDER,
AS WE CURRENTLY ARE DOING WITH COMMUNICATIONS GEAR FOR
PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU'S AIRCRAFT, THE PROVISION OF NON-LETHAL
MILITARY RELATED EQUIPMENT. FYI BGEN ADAMS, WHO HEADS
WHCA, TOLD DCM DURING PRESIDENT FORD'S VISIT HE HOPED TO BE
ABLE TO FORWARD SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS ON AIRCRAFT
COMMUNICATIONS PACKAGE TO EMBASSY WITHIN A WEEK AFTER
RETURN TO WASHINGTON. PLEASE ADVISE STATUS. END FYI.
I BELIEVE WE SHOULD DUCK FOR THE TIME BEING ANY MORE
SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO THE MORE AMBITIOUS REQUESTS BY
SAYING THAT WE ARE STUDYING THEM AND ASKING ROMANIANS FOR
THEIR RATIONALE IN LIGHT OF THE OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES.
THOSE WHICH CAN BE CLEARLY TIED TO ROMANIAN INTERESTS IN
SPACE ACTIVITIES (REF D) AND TO THE COOPERATIVE PPROGRAM
WITH NASA SHOULD BE NOTED BY GEN WEYAND AS HAVING GOOD
PROSPECTS FOR APPROVAL. BEYOND THAT, I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER ANY
MEANINGFUL DISTINCTION, GIVEN OUR CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN
MILITARY SALES, CAN BE DRAWN BETWEEN THE LETHAL AND NON-
LETHAL OR OFFENSIVE AND NON-OFFENSIVE ITEMS OF THE
MILITARY SHOPPING LIST (REF B).

4. THE IMPACT OF AN ARMS RELATIONSHIP ON ROMANIAN-SOVIET
RELATIONS WOULD OF COURSE BE DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE
NATURE AND MAGNITUDE OF THE RELATIONSHIP. IT SHOULD BE
SAID AT THE OUTSET THAT I DO NOT BELIEVE CEAUSESCU HAS
TAKEN LEAVE OF HIS SENSES BY HAVING THIS HERETOFORE
UNTOUCHABLE SUBJECT BROACHED WITH US. THE GOR HAS
TRADITIONALLY HAD AN UNCANNY SENSE ON HOW FAR IT COULD
PUSH THE SOVIETS. AND ON PAST RECORD IT IS HARD TO ARGUE
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THAT THE ROMANIANS DO NOT HAVE THE MEASUREMENT OF THEIR
LEASH PRETTY ACCURATELY CALIBRATED DOWN TO THE LAST
MILLIMETER. ADDITIONALLY, AS YOU WILL RECALL THE GOR
HAS BEEN ON THE SEARCH FOR ARMS FROM WEST EUROPEAN NEUTRALS
SINCE AS EARLY AS 1973. THE ROMANIAN RATIONALE THAT BY
BUILDING UP ITS OWN DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY (FROM WHATEVER
SOURCE) IT THEREBY ENHANCES THE CAPABILITY OF THE WARSAW
PACT IS A TOUGH ARGUMENT TO PARRY - AT LEAST BY ITS PACT

PARTNERS. I CONCLUDE THAT THE ROMANIANS HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE SCALE OF THE SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP THEY SEEK WITH THE U.S. (WHICH THEY PROBABLY DEFINE AS EXTREMELY LIMITED) IS SUSCEPTIBLE TO SUFFICIENT IDEOLOGICAL AND MILITARY ARGUMENT TO COVER ANY CONCEIVABLE SOVIET RETALIATORY THREAT.

5. THE COST TO THE U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP IS ONE I BASICALLY LEAVE FOR YOU AND YOUR ASSOCIATES TO ANALYZE, THOUGH I DO NOT SEE HOW IT WOULD PLEASE THE SOVIETS AND COULD SPAWN ENDLESS SOVIET AND WARSAW PACT SPECULATION ON WHAT ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL THERE IS FOR U.S.-ROMANIAN MILITARY COOPERATION. AT A MINIMUM I WOULD ASSUME ANY SUCH MOVE ON OUR PART WOULD BE VIEWED BY THEM AS A PROVOCATIVE EXTENSION OF U.S. MILITARY INFLUENCE TO A STATE ON ITS BORDER AND AT LEAST AN ELASTIC DEFINITION OF THE HELSINKI DOCUMENT.

6. FURTHER FACTORS ABOUT WHICH I SIMPLY DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO COMMENT AT ANY LENGTH BUT WHICH ARE OBVIOUSLY RELEVANT ARE OUR OVERALL ARMS SUPPLY POLICY AND OUR EMERGING ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH YUGOSLAVIA.

7. I AM CONVINCED WE HAVE A VALID AND CONTINUING STAKE IN AN INCREASINGLY INDEPENDENT ROMANIA, BUT I AM NOT CONVINCED THAT THIS NEEDS TO TAKE THE FORM OF A MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP, WHICH MIGHT REINFORCE THE REPRESSIVE NATURE OF THE CEAUSESCU REGIME.

8. THUS I COME OUT WHERE I CAME IN. LET'S MOVE AHEAD WITH A TANGIBLE DEMONSTRATION OF INTEREST IN THE NON-LETHAL, COMMUNICATIONS AND SPACE RELATED ELEMENTS OF THE ROMANIAN REQUEST. ON THE REMAINDER OF THE ROMANIAN SHOPPING LIST I CONCUR WITH THE STATE/DOD APPROACH
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CONTAINED IN REF C AND STRONGLY RECOMMEND WE SIDESTEP ANY RESPONSE UNTIL (A) WE HAVE A CLEARER IDEA OF THE DIMENSIONS OF THE GOR'S PERCEPTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP AND (B) THEREAFTER UNTIL WE HAVE MORE CAREFULLY EVALUATED THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP, DETENTE, MBFR, AND OUR STAKE IN YUGOSLAVIA.
BARNES

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